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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000241

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2016

TAGS: PREL KPKO ET ER SU AU

SUBJECT: A/S FRAZER AND NORWEGIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER  
JOHANSEN DISCUSS ETHIOPIA-ERITREA, SUDAN

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Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: Integrating Eritrea into the international community through promoting productive Eritrean engagement to resolve the crisis in Darfur could also produce forward movement on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute, Norwegian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Raymond Johansen told A/S for African Affairs Jendayi Frazer on the margins of the AU Summit in Khartoum, January 23. A/S Frazer and Johansen also discussed enhancing NATO engagement in support of the AU, and the need to bring the Chinese on board with assisting CPA implementation and AMIS transition to a UN mission. End summary.

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ETHIOPIA-ERITREA EFFORTS TO EXPLOIT A SMALL OPENING  
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¶2. (C) Johansen commended A/S Frazer,s efforts to resolve the Ethiopia-Eritrea border dispute and said that Norway fully supports USG engagement on the issue. A/S Frazer responded that past experience shows that making even a little progress on the border issue is very difficult, although both parties appear interested in finding a resolution.

¶3. (C) A/S Frazer said that the USG is exploring how best to move forward given a small opening for progress. It is in Eritrea,s benefit not to have that opening close, because the status quo favors Ethiopia, she noted. Tension between Ethiopia and Eritrea is not limited to the border, A/S Frazer said, observing that Ethiopia and Eritrea were not seated next to each other at the AU Summit.

¶4. (C) A/S Frazer told Johansen that her recent trip to the region was gauged to detect if there is a sense of will to resolve the conflict and also to inform a decision on the UN Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea,s (UNMEE) disposition. A/S Frazer noted that she visited UNMEE soldiers and saw their determination to carry out their mission. UNMEE,s mission, though, is hampered by Eritrean flight bans, which renders UNMEE vulnerable and limits its scope of activity.

¶5. (C) The international community needs to put maximum pressure on Eritrea to allow UNMEE flights and on Ethiopia to allow demarcation to start, A/S Frazer said. A/S Frazer

noted that both countries are right - demarcation requires dialogue, but Ethiopia agreed to a final and binding decision regarding delimitation and demarcation. Sustained pressure is needed to achieve a result.

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NEXT STEPS: EEEBC MEETING, BRING ERITREA INTO THE FOLD  
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¶ 16. (C) A/S Frazer told Johansen that the next step is to convene a meeting of the Ethiopia-Eritrea Boundary Commission (EEBC) and persuade Ethiopia to attend. The EEBC also must be flexible, A/S Frazer noted. The EEBC's stance that delimitation and demarcation are the same is unhelpful. A/S Frazer said that the EEBC should make a statement to restore Ethiopia's confidence. The challenge is to get Ethiopia on board without scaring off Eritrea, she noted.

¶ 17. (C) A/S Frazer said that Eritrea sees the EEBC as the only legally valid body. She posited a subcommittee to engage in technical discussion, using the successful Military Coordination Committee (MCC) as a model.

¶ 18. (C) While Ethiopia is clearly interested in resolving the dispute, Eritrea's will to compromise is largely untested, A/S Frazer observed. Johansen said that Eritrea is not at all flexible, but taking steps to bring Eritrea back into the fold of the international community could provide a key. Johansen noted that Eritrea is still largely isolated, and does not even take part in most African Union (AU) meetings. Eritrea needs acceptance and acknowledgement of the helpful role it could play to resolve the Darfur dispute, Johansen opined. Creatively using common interest to engage Eritrea could also produce movement on the border issue, he said.

¶ 19. (C) A/S Frazer took note of Johansen's observations, but observed that while the international community is working

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for regime transformation in Sudan, Eritrea seems to advocate regime change. Eritrea wants the U.S. to hammer Bashir, but the U.S. is working to address impunity by offering assistance to the International Criminal Court while still engaging the regime, she said.

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AMIS REHATTING AND NATO ENGAGEMENT  
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¶ 10. (C) Turning to Darfur, A/S Frazer said that it was important that the AU step up to tackle Darfur, and that the USG wants to work to build AU capacity. While African troops should form the core of a military mission in Darfur, force generation, logistics, financial, and other constraints make transition to the UN practical.

¶ 11. (C) The international community needs to shore up AMIS in the transition period to prevent a further breakdown of security, A/S Frazer noted. The parties in Darfur are testing AMIS and the situation will only get worse. This means strategizing to get NATO more involved in Darfur by providing planning, operational, and logistics assistance. A/S Frazer said that the U.S. intends to work with the AU to determine the best formula for a value-added NATO role. Johansen commented that it is important that AU sensitivities are indeed taken into account.

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CPA Implementation  
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¶ 12. (C) The Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC) work plan should be finished o/a January 29, AEC Chair Amb. Vraalsen said. He thanked A/S Frazer for U.S. assistance to support and equip the AEC office as well as for close cooperation with USAID. Vraalsen said that there are still a

dozen issues slowing CPA implementation.

¶13. (C) Vraalsen said that VPs Taha and Salva Kiir need to be encouraged to set up a civil administration in Abyei to defuse a ticking time bomb. He observed that the U.S., Norway, and UN, plus the Dutch seem to be the only "genuinely concerned" parties.

¶14. (C) A/S Frazer said that the Chinese also have a role. The Chinese say their interest is stability and want the National Congress Party (NCP) to stay. The U.S. agrees on stability, but we need to convince the Chinese that some NCP policies lead to instability so pressure and assistance are needed. Vraalsen concurred, noting that China recently donated five million dollars to the NCP and that Beijing has continued economic interest in Sudan. He said that the Troika needs to build a bridge to the Chinese. A/S Frazer added that blue-hatting the AMIS mission also requires China's support in the UNSC.

¶15. (U) A/S Frazer approved this message.

¶16. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

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